

reasons. But if we are going to allow the government to take away our liberty, to allow the Federal Government to say there is nothing you can do in this country, including breathe, unless you have the permission of the Federal Government to act in a certain way, and if you don't act in that certain way, you will be fined, and if you do not pay the fine you will be jailed, there is absolutely nothing left of the freedom that this country was based upon.

The former Vice President of the United States likes to talk about inconvenient truths. The great inconvenient truth in this country is the U.S. Constitution. Let us not fail in our fidelity to it.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 55 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BLUMENAUER) at noon.

PRAYER

The Reverend Chris Williamson, Strong Tower Bible Church, Franklin, Tennessee, offered the following prayer:

Our Father, we thank You for this opportunity to gather together and seek Your wisdom. We acknowledge You as our great God and king, and it is our desire to do the things that please You.

In centuries past, You have proven Your love to us, and You have blessed us bountifully to the degree that we constantly ask You to bless America.

But Father, in these pressing times, we rise up and America chooses to bless You. We bless You for Your love. We bless You for Your grace. We bless You for Your power, and we bless You for Your son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Please guide these men and women as they discuss matters today that affect so many people in our great Nation.

We promise to give Your name all of the praise for any good thing that happens as a result of our meeting together.

These and many other blessings we ask in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. Lance) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LANCE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

HONORING THE REVEREND CHRIS WILLIAMSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in welcoming Pastor Chris Williamson of Franklin, Tennessee, as he serves as our honorary chaplain for today.

He brings with him today the associate pastor from his church, Anthony Hendrix, and also a longtime friend of mine, Scott Roley, who is now the senior pastor of Christ Community Church.

The music industry is really what brought Pastor Williamson to middle Tennessee, and as his music performance career ended, however, he really felt a calling to the pulpit.

In 1995, he founded the Strong Tower Bible Church and has built Strong Tower into one of Franklin's most dynamic and well-known churches. My colleagues will be interested to know that Congressman JOE PITTS' son and his family attend Strong Tower. His commitment to racial reconciliation is evident through his work as an author, his mission work, as well as the intentional multiethnic and diverse background of his congregation. He is a devoted family man, and I appreciate the opportunity to represent his fine family in Congress.

Please join me in honoring him on his service to the House of Representatives today, and I wish him only the best in the years to come.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. BOSWELL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the important strides Congress is making toward our Nation's health care reform.

I am pleased the Senate will be including a public option in their version of the health reform bill. A public option is absolutely essential. America's health insurance industry needs a mechanism that will level the playing field and protect consumers. The public option that we create must be fair and pay doctors and hospitals accordingly.

Many of us are very concerned that our rural doctors and hospitals are

having many troubles. That is why I support language that will direct the Institute of Medicine to study the Medicare reimbursement formula and direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to fix these flawed reimbursements.

Medical professionals in my home State of Iowa were recently ranked second by the Commonwealth Foundation for providing some of the best care in the Nation. Yet when we are reimbursed by Medicare, they receive half as much per enrollee compared to many other States. Without fair pay, these providers will be pushed further into the red and out of Iowa and other States with the same problem.

The studies that we have proposed to revise Medicare reimbursement rates and create quality measures will pave the way.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. BOEHNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, as we stand here, the health care bill is being written in secret in Speaker PELOSI's office and over in the Senate by Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID, even though the President of the United States during his campaign made clear that these negotiations ought to be out in the public and we ought to have C-SPAN cameras in there to allow the American people to see who is fighting for what side. Yet, it is not happening. It is being written in secret.

And no wonder it is being written in secret because the Democrat majorities are doing exactly what the American people don't want: a big government-run plan. I wonder if the 53 new agencies, boards, commissions and mandates that were in the original House bill will continue to be in this bill that is being written in secret.

But this bill is in secret for one big reason. It is going to cost over \$1 trillion. It is going to raise taxes. It is going to have mandates on individuals. It is going to destroy jobs, and it is going to cut Medicare for our seniors.

What cuts to seniors are going to be in this bill? No one knows. All I know is that there were \$162 billion worth of cuts to Medicare Advantage in the original House bill, \$162 billion, and I have 27,000 Medicare Advantage enrollees in my district. And according to the Congressional Budget Office, some 80 percent of them are likely to lose their health coverage under this proposal.

Republicans have better solutions. Just go to healthcare.gov and see the Republican solutions that will help make our current system work better and not have this big government takeover of our health care delivery system.